

starvation, wrote meanwhile some of "The Letters of Obscure Men," and other things against the obscurantists, received the poet's crown from the hands of Maximilian himself at Augsburg in July 1517, and finally appeared in the court of the Archbishop of Maintz, who employed him in a mission to King Francis I. A strange place for such a man whose morals were as lax as his creed, did we not bear in mind that the tolerant Archbishop Albrecht was a patron of letters, and Hutten was in sore need of his patronage. Out of this chaotic life of adventure the man of letters, the poet, the patriot, was ultimately evolved, and as patriotic publicist Hutten played for a few meteoric years a conspicuous part in the revolutionary movement of the time.

In him Luther cannot be said to have found a disciple who had drank in the evangelical fervour of the master, though he could quote Scripture and talk theology on occasion. Hutten was certainly not an evangelical Christian, but he hated the pope as a foreign usurper, he hated the clergy as the minions of this usurper, he hated the princes as the enemies of his order, and he hailed in Luther a leader in the cause of the political and intellectual regeneration of Germany, for which he himself had been working like a Titan for the last half-dozen years through his satires, invectives, letters, reform programmes, poems. He was even more than Luther a man of action as well as a scholar, and his activity had a wider scope. The religious question was for him merely the lever to the attainment of political results. He was a humanist and a nationalist rather than a Protestant—the enemy of ecclesiastical tyranny on humanist and national grounds. He would draw the sword without hesitation against this tyranny if other methods failed, and it is evident that at this period he had succeeded in imbuing Luther with something of his own impetuous, fierce spirit. Even Luther, as we have seen, is found threatening fire and sword if the enemy will not listen to argument and appeal. "If the fury of the Romanists continue," he exclaims in the reply to Prierias, which he penned in the year 1520, "there seems to me to be no remedy left but that the emperor, kings and princes, girding on their armour, attack these pests of the earth, and decide the matter, not by words but with the